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TEENTH OF THE SERIES OF SABBATH EVENING LECTURES, ON
"MISUNDERSTOOD SCRIPTURES."

THE WITCH OF ENDOR,

AND

MODERN SPIRITISM.

A LECTURE,

BY

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"THE YOUNG MEN'S COVENANT BAND"

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"THE YOUNG WOMEN'S COVENANT BAND"

OF THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, TROY, N. Y.

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1 SAMUEL XXVIII: 3–25.

"Since we have spoken of witches," said Lord Byron, "what think you of the witch of Endor? I have always thought this the finest and most finished witch scene that ever was written or conceived, and you will be of my opinion if you consider all the circumstances of the actors of the case, together with the gravity, simplicity, and density of the language. It beats all the ghost scenes I ever read."—*Kennedy's Conversations with Byron.*

Nature and the Bible are mate volumes by the same author. Each was divinely designed to aid in interpreting the other; both to reveal God to man. Nature, His "elder Scripture," reveals Him as the primal cause of all its causes, lawgiver of all its laws, designer of all its beneficent results. "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." His works throw light upon His word; and His word upon His works. As each is progressively better understood, their harmony will become more and more apparent, and it shall be seen that real antagonism exists only between human opinions in regard to nature and revelation, and not between these twin products of the same God.

During the past few years the science of geology has demonstrated the falsity of an interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis, which had been held sacred for ages; but, while overthrowing the human interpretation, it has marvelously confirmed the divine integrity of that chapter, by showing its true teaching, corroborated by testimony found in the remains of geologic ages.

So, I believe it will be in regard to other sciences, specially those which are revealing the wondrous physical and spiritual natures of man—their mysterious relations to each other and strange facts in connection with their abnormal conditions. Divine truths in these departments are yet to throw astonishing light on the real meaning of the divine word. Do not, therefore, friends, make the

woful mistake of identifying men's opinions of the Bible—however long cherished or sacredly held—with the Bible itself; and if in the progress of knowledge you shall see venerable, traditional interpretations totter and fall, be not alarmed. Remember that they are merely human expositions, not the record itself. That "cannot be broken;" "the word of our God shall stand forever;" that is the "sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the day-star arise in your hearts."

I now ask your attention to an application of some of God's truths revealed by science, to the exposition of the witch scene recorded in the 28th chapter of 1st Samuel. Preliminarily, I wish to call your attention to an historic fact, which may prepare the way for an unprejudiced study of this sadly, as I think, "misunderstood Scripture." It is true that the later Commentators give it *as their opinion* that the spirit of Samuel actually appeared on this occasion, and in this, Spiritists claim strong proof of their doctrine. But, and this is the historic fact to which I refer—with few exceptions, the Christian fathers, theologians, and reformers held that the appearance of Samuel was not real, but imaginary. This was the belief of both Luther and Calvin. You will understand, therefore, that men's opinions have not all been, as claimed, in favor of the popular interpretation.

In this scripture *three persons* are represented as actors. I will give you information concerning each of these, separately, before studying the scene in which they appear together. Because to any acquainted with his history, it must seem strange to find the great prophet of Israel, the founder of the first school of prophets, in such company, and taking part in such proceedings as are here recorded, I notice him first.

Samuel, you will remember, was one of the last of the Judges. His history is one of the purest, noblest, on any record. He was the son of the pious Hannah who took him to the tabernacle at Shiloh, with a thank-offering, and said to Eli the priest, while she held the beautiful child in her arms, "For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also have I lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." Thus, pious mother that she was, she dedicated her child to God. He remained in the taber-

nacle, and spent his youth and early manhood in its sacred services. Subsequently he was elevated to the Judgeship of Israel, and administered the laws during twenty years, so as to meet the approbation of God and promote the highest interests of the people. He was also honored with the gift of prophecy: so that he was not only a civil Judge, but a spiritual Guide. Moreover he presided over the school of prophets at Ramah, with dignity and success. When old, he appointed his sons Judges. They, however, walked "not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." Israel, dissatisfied, and influenced by the example of other nations, demanded a king. This was painful to Samuel, and offensive to God; for he said to His aged servant, while smarting under the ingratitude of the people, "They have not rejected thee, but rejected me from reigning over them." The Prophet Judge anointed their new king, and while he lived was by his side as a living conscience. He died at the age of ninety-eight: but before his death he assembled all Israel at Gilgal, to hear his farewell address. It was a grand scene. Before the gathered thousands, the aged man, with white flowing locks, venerable form, and voice tremulous with solemn emotion, arose to make his final speech. It is recorded in the twelfth of his first Book. I commend it to you. Do not fail to read it. I can only quote a few verses. And Samuel said unto all Israel, "Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you. And now behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old, and gray-headed, and behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am, witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you." How exalted the eulogium on his character, conveyed in the response of the people—"Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand." Soon after this he died, and was buried with national pomp at Ramah, and all Israel made lamentation over him. In all the annals of the Gentile world, no character so nearly resembles his as the Grecian Aristides—surnamed the Just: who after holding high places of trust, was condemned

to exile by his own countrymen, and died in poverty, but with an unsullied fame.

The next person named in the record before us is *Saul*. Glance we at his history. He was "the son of Kish, a mighty man of power." Of young Saul it is said, "He was a choice young man, and a goodly." And this is recorded of his personal appearance: "There was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he; from his shoulders and upwards he was higher than any of the people." Endowed with extraordinary intellectual power, in addition to his physical superiority, he was extremely popular; and to the eye of the Jews, longing for a king, he was their very beau-ideal of royalty. The account of Samuel's first interview with him in relation to the matter, is very interesting. We are told that when the aged prophet said to the noble youth, "On whom is the desire of all Israel? Is it not on thee and thy father's house?" Saul heard it with marked modesty; for instead of eagerly seizing the crown held out before him, meekly he replied: "Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore speakest thou so unto me?" Subsequently a national convention was held at Mizpeh, and he was chosen, by lot, to be the King of Israel. When the result was made known the venerable prophet stood up with young Saul before the gathered representatives of the nation, and said, pointing to the King, "See ye whom the Lord hath chosen—that there is none among the people like him." And the mighty crowd, swayed by tumultuous joy, shouted, "God save the king!" He was then anointed by the prophet, and for a time was true to his God. During that period, as a king, he was wise in counsel, victorious in battle, popular at home and honored abroad; but a woful change came over him. Popularity pampered his pride; gratified ambition made him self-conceited and self-reliant. He forsook God. He chafed at the faithful rebukes of Samuel, usurped the priestly functions of the prophet, and resolved on war without consulting God. Before his death, the faithful Samuel, then an old man, wearing a mantle, thus addressed him: "Thou hast done foolishly. Thou hast not kept the commandments of thy God. Thou hast rebelled and rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft; therefore, because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, therefore He hath rejected thee!" The king saw his faithful friend no more, for he was gathered to his fathers in Ramah.

Months rolled on, but Saul was a changed man. He became morose, gloomy, and revengeful; insomuch, that with his own hand he endeavored to murder David, his son-in-law. He ordered Doeg to slay eighty-five priests of the Lord, and became so utterly depraved that Jehovah, seeing that he was "joined to his idols, let him alone." And then the Urim became dark; prophets were silent, and dreams and visions disappeared. He was abandoned to his own heart, the heaviest curse that God can inflict on mortal.

The remaining person brought before us in this record is the *Witch*. This woman belonged to that class of persons which has existed in almost every age of the world, and are called by different names. In the Bible we have the following enumeration of different classes of these characters, the origin of whose arts is unknown, but whose highest developments were reached in Egypt, and from thence spread through the world.

There was the "*user of divination*:" a mode of gaining knowledge of future events, employed among the tribes of the south part of Palestine—Ezekiel xxi: 21 specifies three of the means they employed—arrows, sculptured images, and the entrails of animals. The "*observer of times*," or of dreams, was another who, by this method, common in Egypt, Assyria, among the Israelites, and the Greeks and Romans, sought supernatural knowledge. The "*enchanter*," or serpent charmer, *v.* Psalms 58: 45; the "*witches*" and "*sorcerers*," composed most dangerous classes in Canaan, and are so fearfully condemned in Ex. vii: 11; 2 Kings ix: 22; Numb. xxiii: 3; Jer. xxvii: 9; Mic. v: 12. The "*charmers*" by the power of song—a method of soothing the nervous system, now used in the East—mentioned by Xenophon as common among the Greeks; and according to 1 Sam. xvi: 23 and Ps. lviii: 5, were numerous among the Israelites. Then there was the "consulter of familiar spirits" the *ventriloquist*—alluded to by Pliny and the Latin scholiast—persons who exerted a nervous influence on boys, by causing them to look intently on vases, from which they seemed to call the spirits of the dead, while really they only spoke from their own abdomens. These are mentioned in Isa. viii: 19, xxix: 4. There was also the "*necromancer*," or consulter of departed spirits, referred to in Deut. xviii: 11. And besides these, we find "astrologers," star-gazers, and monthly prognosticators, mentioned in Isaiah xlvii: 13.

Now I beg you to observe the strange fact, that this Bible, which so many people now-a-days profess to think behind the age, still has grouped together all the forms of witchery, enchantment, divination, necromancy, &c., that the learned world yet knows of. Observe the view of the character of these manifestations presented in the Bible.

The reality of mysterious phenomena is admitted.

It is stated that by means of these different methods, a real, mysterious influence was exerted, causing strange sounds, strange sights, and mysterious results—as the changing of the magician's rods in Egypt, were produced. And let any one study, in connection with the Bible, the history of Egyptian, Grecian, Roman and Indian magicians, soothsayers, jugglers and wonder-workers, and he will assuredly conclude that the mysterious manifestations of the present day are still far behind what has been seen and heard in ancient and modern times, in other lands. For in almost every land and every age, the operation of these occult agencies has been witnessed and commented on by men most eminent in science and literature—by Franklin and Hale, by Walter Scott, Salverte and Thompson, by Galen, Pliny and Cicero, by Plato, Socrates and Zoroaster, as well as by Moses, David and Isaiah, Luke and Paul. The admitted facts are nowhere ascribed to supernatural agencies. Those causes are not always explained; they are admitted to be mysterious, originating in the deep-hidden laws of nature, scientific skill and artful management, operating upon the nervous element in the physical constitution, and the superstitious element in the human mind.

Another point in regard to the Bible view of this matter, is of immense importance, viz: that *a resort to such means to obtain knowledge is everywhere condemned.*

Isaiah vii: 19. "And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" Deut. xviii: 10, 11, 12. "When thou art come to the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a

consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee." Lev. xx: 6. "The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, I will set my face against that soul, I will cast him off from his people." 27. "*The man or woman that hath a familiar spirit shall surely be put to death.*" Consult also xviii: 12, 14. Hosea iv: 11, 12. So in the New Testament, in the account of the rich man and of Lazarus, Jesus says, "*If they believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*" Now the woman at Endor belonged to one of the classes I have mentioned. She was a necromancer, who professed to be able to call up the spirits of the dead. Women of her class had marked peculiarities. They were generally advanced in years; deeply versed in human nature; acquainted with all the weaknesses, hopes and fears of the human heart; possessed of high nervous organizations, great nervous and magnetic power. They were also familiar with exciting drugs, and their mysterious effect on body and mind. Further, they were the keenest possible observers of men and passing events. And I ask your attention to this fact—they were *always wicked women, abandoned by their own sex, living alone, and devotees of the lowest forms of idolatry.* Such was the one before us. Her very name indicates that she was a devotee of the god of Ador.

True, in this record she is called "a woman, that had a familiar spirit," and I call her a witch. Why? Because, although sexually she was a woman, professionally she practiced witchcraft—and *therefore was a witch*, and such the world has called her, ever since this record was written. Because such was her business, her profession by which she obtained her livelihood, she would have acknowledged the correctness of this title. I don't doubt but that she would have been "ashamed" of the ignorance of any, who would deny her right to the proper name of the profession, which she made a life occupation. History shows that the men were called "wizards," and women "witches"; and because it came to be largely monopolized by women, it resulted in the business being called "witchcraft," and because, in this record she appears before us *in her professional capacity*, I give the "woman of Endor" her professional title. I deem it merest justice to her to do so.

Belonging to the most degraded social class, an outcast from respectable society, she would have grinned a ghastly smile to have heard herself called "a most estimable person"; simply because, when she saw the wretched king so affected by her "communications" that "there was no strength in him,"—he having "eaten no bread all the day, or night"—and doubtless afraid of the indignation which she felt might arise in his mind against her, *whose life was in his power*, she was shrewd enough to propitiate him with a hearty meal. Any witch was smart enough for that!

Observe now, these women did not profess to call up the dead by the agency of Satan or of inferior demons; but by the power of their gods, who were their "familiar spirits," and who were idol gods, and therefore had no existence. Another fact to be remembered is, that these sorcerers possessed the power of what the ancients called Engastrymysme, that is, the power of speaking from the stomach, or ventriloquism. Pliny says, that in the temple of Hercules, at Tyre, which was located in the very country where the Witch of Endor lived, on the border of the Mediterranean, there was a consecrated stone, out of which gods were said to arise, that is, strange apparitions appeared, to which the attending priestess, by the power of ventriloquism, gave voice.

The last and the highest power possessed by these persons, to which I have now time to refer, was this: *the capability, in abnormal conditions, of coming "en rapport" with the minds of those who consulted them*, so that those minds were opened to them. This power, possessed by persons of a certain nervous temperament, can be traced through all the records of the past. We call it animal magnetism, clairvoyance, the nervous principle or psychology. It is demonstrated now, beyond a doubt, that by mysterious but purely natural influences, a person of *a certain nervous organization can be placed in such connection with another, similarly organized, that the mind of the latter will be open to that of the former—the former will feel, see, and know just what the latter feels, sees, knows.* Let me give you a reliable fact. Eliot Warburton, Esq., one of the finest scholars of the age, in his book of travels, entitled "The Crescent and the Cross," states, that at Cairo, he engaged a magician to visit him, who performed the following. A boy was called in, and, after some ado, was made to look intently into his own hand; the magician gazed

at him fixedly, working himself up into a great excitement; at last he said the charm was complete, and told Warburton that *any one he asked for would appear.* He asked for Sir Henry Hardinge;—the boy said "he is here," and described him correctly, as a little man in a black dress, white cravat, grey hair, and having *but one leg.* Then W. asked for Lord E—n: the boy said, "he is here," and described him accurately—as a long man, with green glasses, bending forward. Lablache and others were called, and appeared *to the boy who had been placed in psychological connection with Warburton by the magician,* so that he saw what was in the consulter's mind. Records of the East are full of such instances.

In the American Journal of Insanity, Dr. Bell, one of the most learned physiologists and keenest investigators of the times, gives the results of his examinations of modern "Spiritual phenomena." He treats the whole matter with candor, and affirms that the spirit theory must be given up, for after the most extensive investigation he is satisfied that "*what the questioner knows, the (so called) spirits know, and what the questioner does not know the (so called) spirits are entirely ignorant of.*"

The Witch of Endor had that power—as well as all others of her class—haggard, godless, abandoned though she was. And the developments of this, before those who do not possess the power themselves, and are ignorant of its existence, produce the same effect in modern that they did in ancient times. They are readily ascribed to the spirits of the dead.

The first object of this lecture is now accomplished. You have now before you *Samuel, Saul, the Witch, and their individual callings and characters.*

We are now prepared to contemplate the *scene* in the record before us. Remember, the faithful Samuel is long since dead, and gone to Heaven. Remember Saul's condition. He is abandoned by God; the blood of eighty-five murdered dead is on his hands. He has rejected God, and God has rejected him. The hearts of Israel are alienated from him in consequence of his unjust and cruel government, and are already entwined around young David, whom Samuel has long since anointed king, and in whom Saul has long beheld a successful rival, and vainly sought to murder. He is morose, sad and gloomy. He eats no food, and has grown weak and pale. His ancient national foes, encouraged by the disordered state

of his kingdom, flushed with hope, will attack him on the morrow. They have marched unresisted to the centre of his country, and as he gazed upon them, he has trembled beneath the conscious certainty that he was doomed—lost—forsaken by man—abandoned by God.

Night overshadows the earth; but not so black is its gloom, as the darkness that fills the soul of the miserable king. *Of whom does he now remind you?* Do you remember Shakespeare's Macbeth? It would seem as if the immortal bard must have had the history of Saul before him, when he wrote that terrific tragedy. Think of the parallel between Saul the king of Israel, and Macbeth the king of Scotland. Both arose *from low stations.* There was a time when neither of them ever dreamed of royalty. Both were *men of mark*, but treacherous and cruel. Both were *warriors.* Both were *murderers* of their own guests; Saul in purpose, was guilty of the murder of his guest David; Macbeth in deed, for he imbued his hands in the blood of Duncan. Both were the *cause of other murders;* Saul bade Doeg kill eighty-five priests; Macbeth hired a villain to waylay and slay Banquo. Both hunted the innocent and slew them because of *jealous revenge.* Macbeth slew the helpless wife and children of Macduff; Saul hunted like a bloodhound Abiather for favoring David. Both sought to cement their tottering thrones *by blood.* Both had *evil spirits;* the one in his own soul; the other, in the form of an ambitious, tempting, murderous wife. Both came into *desperate straits.* Both were pressed by *armed foes.* Both were abandoned by men and God. Both in their dire extremity resorted to *witches;* Saul at gloomy Endor; Macbeth on the blasted heath, amid thunder and lightning met the unearthly hags—

> "Black spirits and white,
> Red spirits and gray."

Both died *unnatural and tragical deaths*, by means of the same weapon—the sword. The heads of both were cut off *as trophies.* The injured Macduff bore in triumph the ghastly head of Macbeth; and the Philistines, the day after the battle, cut off Saul's head and put it upon the walls of Bethsheban.

Tracing this parallel no further, I must ask you to look at a different view. Starting from Mount Tabor, we go southward four miles, until we reach a ravine, deep-sunken, and buried now in dark

shadows of overhanging woods. We pass down into the dismal shades, and in a dreary dwelling, near to which we see no human abode, we find Endor's witch, a lonely hag, the dread of children and good women; hedged around with a circle of evil rumors; a wretched outcast from human society; an outlaw, judged worthy of death by civil and divine governments. The dead hour of midnight has arrived. She hath heard no sound save

"The owl's screech and the cricket's cry."

But look at her; she hears a noise; it is the sound of approaching footsteps; her sunken, keen black eyes dilate—she scarcely breathes—she knows that Saul has put to death all of her craft his officers could find, and now unknown steps are stealthily drawing near. A low knock is heard at her door; calmly she opens it and a tall man, muffled up in his robes, enters, followed by two attendants. He asks in a low voice, "Bring me him up whom I shall name unto thee." The keen woman suspects a snare, and replies, "Thou knowest that Saul hath cut off those who have familiar spirits, wherefore then, layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" He assures her upon oath that he will not betray her. Her suspicions are allayed. She fixes her magnetic gaze upon the pale face of the man before her, whose nerves are excited to the highest degree, and who, having eaten nothing that day or night, is a most admirable subject for psychological and magnetic operation—whose mind being wrought up to the intensest interest, his will being entirely submisssive to hers, what modern medium could have wished for an easier subject to operate upon? But mark: all is still as she gazes with her snaky eyes into his pale face—until the nervous and magnetic union between them is formed; and lo! *she sees all that is in his mind.* Remember, he came there to see Samuel. Remember, the old man was in Saul's mind, as he last saw him, with his venerable locks and mantle. Remember, he was expecting to meet him, and therefore the moment the magnetic union is formed, and the woman sees what is in Saul's mind, she exclaims, "I see Samuel!" *of course she did.* She saw the object most prominent in his mind; and then, immediately *recognizing her consulter*, she cries out with affright. At this point the mass of readers and commentators, in my honest judgment have made a mistake.

They have thought that the certain evidence that *Samuel really*

appeared, is found in the fright of the witch. I submit to you that this is an error; for, remember, she was condemned to death by the the law of the land. Remember, she was suspicious of a snare as soon as she saw the three men, and would not proceed with her incantation until assured upon oath of her safety. Remember, that of no man on earth had she such cause to be afraid as of Saul; for the law condemning witches had been a dead letter until he had put it terribly into execution. Remember, she herself explains the cause of her alarm by her exclamation—"Why hast thou deceived me, for thou art Saul?"

Her alarm, then, was not on account of the figure of Samuel she saw in Saul's mind, for such views her profession made her familiar with; but it was because her life was in jeopardy, inasmuch as she has been detected by the king himself. And mark further, that as soon as Saul again assures her of safety, you hear of no more alarm, but without comprehending the natural agencies at work, she resumes her psychological connection. Saul tremblingly asks, "what sawest thou?" For, recollect, that during the whole scene, it is not said *that he saw anything.* The proof of this is found in the fact that he asks her, "What sawest thou?" She did all the seeing, and told him that she saw "gods ascending out of the earth." Now this was either a conscious lie, for there were no gods in the earth to come up, or the visionary effect of her own excited imagination. Then in reply to a question of Saul, in whose excited mind Samuel was as he last saw him, an old man with a mantle on; ignorant of this purely natural yet strange power, whereby his mind was all open to that of the witch, just like many now-a-days, was satisfied that it was a supernatural power, and so astonished was he that he fell down in alarm. Then commenced the conversation between Saul and the imaginary Samuel through this medium.

An *apparent difficulty* here presents itself, but it is only an apparent one. The record says, "Samuel spake to Saul." This mode of expression is common. It is said that "Solomon built the temple," whereas he did not touch a stone personally. It is said that "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John," whereas he baptized none himself; he did so by the agency of others. You say, "I built yonder house;" you mean you employed others to build it for you. Go to a modern "spirit circle," and receive what purports to be communications from your mother, and they will

come through the medium; and still spiritists will say, "your mother says so-and-so." Then we have no difficulty in understanding, that what purported to come from Samuel, came through the witch medium, who, by the power of ventriloquism, easily caused Saul to believe that the voice was supernatural.

In further proof of the correctness of this interpretation, I ask your attention to a fact, which to my own mind is perfectly conclusive. It is this—*every item of information purporting to come from Samuel, already existed in the knowledge and excited fears of Saul.* Bear in mind the circumstances. Saul, nervous and deluded, *believed* Samuel was personally there, simply because the witch *said she saw him.* How she saw him I have explained. It was natural that Saul should *conceive* of Samuel, demanding why he had been called; hence the question—"Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?" That the holy prophet would have used such language—so heathenish in its wording and purport, if he really had been there, is simply preposterous. But that the psychological impressions would anticipate *such a rebuke* from Samuel, is perfectly natural. And anticipating it, he utters his ready justification, which I beg you to remember. Having "perceived," i. e., become satisfied, from the account of what the witch had said she saw, viz: "an old man covered with a mantle," or linen ephod, such as the prophets wore, that he was in communication with Samuel; and having anticipated the rebuke—this is his doleful answer:—"I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do."

Then commenced the communications. The *first* was—that the "Lord had departed from Saul, and that therefore he ought not to ask aid of him." *Did not Saul know that?* Why, he had just told the imaginary Samuel that God had abandoned him: that attempts to obtain knowledge from departed spirits had been expressly forbidden, he had known from his boyhood: and of his final rejection by Jehovah, Samuel distinctly announced to him before his death. See 1st Sam. xv: 23.

The *second*—stated that "the Lord had taken the kingdom from him and given it to David." *Was that news?* Assuredly not, for Samuel had anointed David king: the people's hearts had all

gathered around him: Jonathan knew this fact, for he said to David, "I know that the Lord hath given thee the kingdom;" and because Saul was well aware of this truth, he had sought assiduously to slay the Lord's anointed.

The *third*—stated that the reason God had done this was because of Saul's conduct in *relation to Amalek*. It will astonish any one who has not critically examined the subject, that the *words of this communication are almost precisely those addressed to Saul*, in awful tones of retributive warning by Samuel, at their last interview before his death—words which had impressed themselves indelibly upon the guilty conscience of the treacherous monarch.

The *fourth* and last—stated that in the morrow's battle, the Philistines would be victorious and himself and sons be slain. Mark the language here employed—"to-morrow thou and thy sons shall be with me." Would Samuel have employed such language if he had been there? Why, for months *before his death* he would not allow Saul to approach him, and would he have so overlooked all moral distinctions as to promise him a place in heaven by his side? Would he not have urged immediate repentance upon the guilty king, and preparation for the speedy entrance into eternity, which was before him? Now I admit that this was not in his mind in the form of *positive knowledge*, as I have demonstrated that the facts of the other communications were; from the nature of the case, it could not be. *But was it not there in another form?* Is not this the very thing *he dreaded*, and to avoid which he sought aid? Was not this a result foreseeable to the most ordinary intelligence, under the circumstances—his own arm being unnerved—his courage gone—his army dispirited—his people disaffected, and God his enemy? I affirm, therefore, with confidence, that this last communication was simply *the terrific embodiment of his own awful apprehensions and torturing fear.*

Sir Walter Scott, in his learned work on "Demonology and Witchcraft," although holding a different theory of this matter from the one I am presenting, still admits the truth of my last statement, in the following language: "The defeat and death of the broken-spirited king was an event, which the circumstances in which he was placed, rendered highly probable, since he was surrounded by a superior army of the Philistines, and his character as a soldier, rendered it likely that he would not survive a defeat, which

must involve the loss of his kingdom." And the result throws light upon the state of his mind. You remember that he was not *slain by the enemy;* he committed *suicide*, an act which he doubtless premeditated, for no one who understands his character, can, for a moment, believe that he would allow himself to be taken captive, the inevitable consequence of a defeat which should leave him unslain. And these are all the communications made to him by this wretched medium, who pretended to call up spirits from the "vasty deep." But no honest, sincere consulter of professed spirits now-a-days, could be more sure that he has received communications direct from the spirit-land, than Saul was. He was convinced, overwhelmed, sore afraid, and fell full length upon the earth. The witch got ready a meal, of which they all partook, and then the wretched king returned to his royal tent at Gilboa.

At last morning's light falls upon the Hebrew mountains, and chases away the shadows of that dismal night. The armies meet in deadly combat. Victory soon perches upon the banners of Philistia. Gilboa is covered with the gory bodies of the slain. The mountain breeze is laden with the wails of the dying, and the air is rent by the victor shouts of the proud foe. A poet hath conceived of Saul at this terrible juncture, stretching his tall form to its utmost height, as he beholds his surviving soldiers, and exclaiming—

> "Away, away, degenerate Hebrews, fly,
> From Saul, nor see your monarch die.
> The hateful phantom vainly now implored,
> Unarmed my spirit and unedged my sword.
> Else, fled not Saul before the haughty foe,
> Nor on his back received the Gentile blow.
> Haste, slave, strike, strike! the victor shall not say
> The chief of Israel was a living prey.
> Strike the sharp weapon through my mangled breast,
> One deep wound more be added to the rest.
> Coward! this is the day, this is the hour,
> Saul not outlives his glory and his power."

Drawing his own sword, he falls upon it; and as his life-blood gurgles away, and through the gathering gloom the ocean fullness of eternity heaves in view, his soul's emotions are thus interpreted:—

"Eternity! how dark the waves that roll,
In booming discord, on my frighted soul.
Eternity! how filled with wrath and gloom;
Creation's vast, yet never closing tomb.
Billows that flow in awful shade and fire—
Black, lowering horrors fierce, and flashing ire.
Mystic and tedious, yet unshunned by me,
Thy dismal terrors, O Eternity!"

Then all was still. Encased in royal armor that magnificent form laid lifeless on the ground, enshrouded, like that of many other spirit consulters, in the blackness of a suicide's death. Over his sad fate the magnanimous David thus lamented, "How are the the mighty fallen! Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor field-offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul as though he had not been anointed with oil. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

The *second object* of this lecture is accomplished. You have before you the witch scene, and my interpretation thereof. I pass to my last object: *which is to present some practical remarks deduced from both of the former.*

First—This subject throws light upon what are called "*spiritual manifestations*" of the present day.

Indeed, the case of the Witch of Endor and Saul is claimed to be one of the clear proofs that a human being can call back the spirits of the dead. Is it not evident that this case, at least, fails to support that theory? Now in addition to the arguments already presented, bear in mind that law of interpretation which requires that *where any passage can be fairly explained on natural principles, we must not resort to a miracle* for its elucidation; and consider, the strength of the *probability* that I am correct, in the view of this passage I have given you. The soul of Samuel, while in his body and out of it, was obedient to the will of Jehovah; while in its body, God was the subject of its love and obedience. Therefore if it had come back from the high ministries of Heaven, it would only have been in obedience to the will of God. Now look at the character of Saul. He has rejected God, and God has rejected him. He will not answer him "by Urim, by prophets or by dreams." He is black with the clotted gore of nearly an hundred

murders. Think of that witch—an idolator—an outcast—an outlaw; and tell me is there the least probability that, to gratify Saul, his enemy, God would send his servant Samuel from Heaven into a witch's den, in response to incantations, on account of which he had commanded that witches should be put to death? and send him, too, on the useless errand of communicating to him facts Saul already knew? Verily not! If one doubt remains, hear this passage, found in 1 Chron. x: 13: "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord: even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not; *and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit—to inquire of it.*" Again I ask, can you believe that the spirit of Samuel would have appeared at the bidding of a vile witch, and the request of an apostate prince? Did God refuse Saul the response of his prophets? and did a witch compel the appearance of Samuel, the chief of the prophets, notwithstanding? No, no!

The only shadow of a reason for this prevalent opinion is based upon the alarm the witch herself expressed, when she said she saw the old man with a mantle. Surely, you will never fall in that error again, while you remember:

First—That Samuel was thus in Saul's mind.

Second—That she merely saw what any clairvoyant could have seen, had he been in magnetic connection with Saul.

Third—That her own language demonstrates the cause of her alarm. She said, "Thou art Saul: why hast thou deceived me?" She was alarmed because she thought she was detected in her unlawful business, by the very king who had ordered such to be put to death. But while to our minds, illuminated by the light of the nineteenth century, there is not even a probability that in this case the spirit of the departed returned to earth, and made communications, still, as I have before hinted, Saul, the majestic king, was satisfied, convinced, that such was the case; that he had really received a communication from a departed spirit; and it is possible that the woman herself really thought so too. For history plainly shows, that that strange, yet purely natural, agent, which we call electricity, galvanism, mesmeric influence, the nervous principle, the psychic force, was known to the ancients and employed by them; and by many was regarded as supernatural, and therefore they supposed, that when, by the excitement of their own nervous

organizations, they induced a corresponding state of nervous sensibility, that it was caused by the spirits of the dead, or other supernatural powers. Hence both parties were often honestly and sincerely deceived. Does not this case then, throw light upon what are called "spiritual manifestations" now-a-days—that portion at least, where the medium merely communicates to the consulter, with whom she is in connection, facts of which she herself is ignorant, but which are all in his mind, though neither written nor spoken by him? And yet how many honest, sincere people there are, who go to a medium, and ask questions, either mentally or orally, in regard to matters known only to themselves, and because the things are either rapped out, written or spoken by the medium, feel just as Saul did, astonished, satisfied, convinced that they have had communications from the dead.

And in regard to the remaining class of these phenomena, such as table moving, producing sounds and communicating matter, which is not in the mind of the consulter—what is the rational and philosophical probability in regard to them?

Just this. Inasmuch as a thousand things now known to be the result of natural influences, in past days have been believed to be the products of supernatural power: and especially inasmuch as mesmeric trances, clairvoyant developments, and psychological influences have been regarded in past days, as mysterious and inexplicable as these phenomena now are, and as, by the light of advancing science, they are now believed by every body to be merely the operations of hitherto unknown mental and physical laws, so I affirm that the reasonable, philosophical probability in regard to them is—that they are one of two things:

They are *either higher developments of now known physical and mental laws—or of others purely natural, yet to be discovered.*

Such was the view the soundest minds in our land held years ago. *But how stands the case now?* The progress of scientific research during the last twenty years has demonstrated that all the phenomena on which spiritism bases its claims are to be traced to mundane sources. With this agree Dr. Carpenter, Faraday, and Mr. Crookes, the discoverer of the metal thallium, and Dr. Huggins, the leading spectroscopist in the world, and almost the first living astronomer. As the case now stands every class of phenomena put forward by spiritists can be and has been produced by scientific experiment.

In the ages past, these natural phenomena, because mysterious, were attributed to heathen gods; two hundred years ago, during the Salem witchcraft excitement, they were credited by witches and by other people to the devil; now spiritists hold that the very same things are due to the agency of departed spirits; while an advanced and advancing science traces them to natural forces.

The monks of the dark ages accidentally found themselves capable of exerting what we call mesmeric influence. They did not know what it was, or how they produced it, any more than honest modern mediums know how their raps are produced: but like them they ascribed it to supernatural power, and thousands of their adherents, just like the adherents of mediums now, religiously believed that it was the product of supernatural agency, which advancing science has demonstrated to be purely natural.

To this view I have heard but one prominent objection, namely, that mediums whose moral character is above reproach, *unitedly assert that they do have intercourse with the departed*—that they are perceptibly conscious of seeing, hearing, and receiving messages from them, and that as consciousness is the highest possible kind of testimony, they ought to be believed. To this I reply that, the validity of proof derived from consciousness, can only be predicated upon *the consciousness of the mind in its normal or natural state.* For, in many abnormal or unnatural mental states, consciousness is no evidence at all. The man who has the delirium tremens is perfectly conscious that he sees snakes and devils, but is his consciousness any evidence of their presence? When under psychological influence, persons see men with noses four feet long, and women with a dozen mouths; is that consciousness any evidence of the existence of such monstrosities? History will aid us on this point. During the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, what was then called necromancy, witchcraft, prevailed far more extensively over Europe than what is called spiritualism yet prevails over America: for it was the general, popular belief.

During a long period, all the mediums in extensive territories affirmed, that they regularly attended what was called the Witches' Sabbath, and met many there whom they knew. And so sure were they of it, that when afterwards persons were placed upon their trial for witchcraft, they testified upon oath, that the accused had been present and participated in the exercises of the Witches' Sab-

bath. They testified, that at those times they had seen the devil in person baptize novitiates, administer the sacrament to them; that they then all feasted, danced and drank until cock-crowing, and then all returned home on the backs of demons, or astride broomsticks. Now these thousands of persons were honest in their belief: to them it was a matter of consciousness—to us a certain delusion. But how do I account for it, on the view presented in this lecture? Thus: everybody believed in witchcraft. Witches were in everybody's mind. *Persons no sooner passed out of the normal into the abnormal or psychological condition, than the universal belief in these spirits impressed itself upon them, and by the mental law to which I have referred, these impressions became embodied as visible realities, and they sincerely believed they were in communication with them.*

So I explain the phenomena of modern spirit intercourse. The medium now sits down in a circle, prepossessed with the idea of communicating with spirits. He passes into the abnormal or clairvoyant state with this impression on his mind. The persons who compose the circle are similarly impressed, for they came there to obtain spiritual manifestations. Each one thinks of the spirit of some departed friend: and all these thoughts, by a strange but natural law, become impressed on the mind of the medium. And then he is able accurately to describe the departed, imitate their actions, tell when and how they died, &c., in exact accordance with the knowledge, latent in the minds of those interested: so that the communications are merely "the responsive echoing of their own mental mechanism—the telegraphic rapping out of their own electric-borne thought." Now you observe that I do not accuse mediums of trickery or deceit. I apply to them or their adherents no scurrilous epithets. I admit the facts they claim. I simply deny their inference. They infer as Saul did, that they are the products of departed spirits. I affirm that they are but the workings, as in the case before us, of mysterious, yet purely natural, physical and mental laws.

But it is said that learned men, occupying high stations, believe in the spirit theory. I reply that history has a parallel for this. What names stand higher than those of Sir Edward Coke and Sir Matthew Hale? Yet both believed in the reality of witchcraft, and the latter presided in 1650 at trials, where persons were convicted of it, and he condemned them to death.

Moreover, it is alleged that the vast numbers of Spirit believers is proof of its truthfulness. "The brains of the world," it is affirmed, are either avowed Spiritists or favorably inclined to its "beautiful principles."

Such expressions are easily made, but not easily proven, and if proven would not amount to much; because "the brains of the world," a few years ago, more generally believed in exploded witchcraft, than now in Spiritism. But there is delusion about this matter, in proof of which I give the testimony of Mr. Tebb, an English Spiritist who traveled over this country in order to ascertain the facts. Judge Edmonds had said the number was between five and six millions: Dixon placed it at three millions: Warren Chase, at eight millions; other parties at ten or eleven millions. But Mr. Tebb, after a long and patient investigation, decided, that "*including the children of believers, the whole number in the United States, is about six hundred and sixty thousand.*" A mighty falling off is this, from the extravagant assertions of heated partisans. Over against this I take the liberty, simply as matter of information, of stating the statistics of our own denomination, which is only one of a magnificent galaxy of Christian denominations, each of which is gloriously enlarging: "The Baptist Year Book" for 1872 gives the following facts:

Number of church members in the United States, 1,689,000; of churches, 18,000; ordained ministers, 12,000; *gain, during* 1871, 22 *Associations:* 69,698 *church members:* 1195 *preachers; averaging two churches, three ministers, and one hundred and ninety new members for each day in the year.* And I am satisfied that similar and perhaps even greater progress has been made by other evangelical denominations. Surely, some at least, of "the brains of the world" must be outside of spiritism!

Doubtless, it has made very considerable progress, but why should it not? Mormonism has made prodigious advance, and expects soon to see the world at its feet. There are multitudes of people who have no settled convictions, who from different causes have become prejudiced against Christianity, and are utterly ignorant of even its first principles, and therefore, prepared to welcome any system which shall rival it. There are large numbers of backsliders, church members who have itching ears, and are regularly carried away by every new "ism" which appears, and besides

these there are hosts of people who are constitutionally superstitious—revel in the marvelous—to whom it is as natural as it is to breathe, to believe in ghosts, and refer everything which is inexplicable to them, to "Spirit manifestations."

Moreover, what is the Spiritism of to-day? Not a mere belief in the "possibility" of intercourse of the dead with the living; nay, that is only the *plausible* nucleus, around which has gathered nearly all of the scepticism and unbelief, disaffection and other antagonisms to Christianity, insomuch that it has come to pass that in it, the church of God now finds its open and only avowed antagonist breathing out sneers and bitter invectives. I pause to ask what has become of "mesmerism," "clairvoyance," "biology," "psychology," "magnetism," and other "isms" which were so popular a short time ago? We hear no more of them: Spiritism has swallowed them all: appropriates their operations to itself, and claims as its own, all their wonders! When I take these facts into the account, I am surprised that such a comparative few are enrolled in its wide stretched ranks. It has been well remarked that "the philosophic Shakespeare pictures only the *strongly excited* as seeing and hearing ghosts, nervous excitement gradually being aroused in mind after mind, until many see the same." The majority of human beings have always shown this tendency.

I feel the force of an inquiry, which I doubt not, has arisen in your mind. It is this:

Admitting, what I do, as to the reality of much of the so called "spirit phenomena," why do not all seek for knowledge through their agency? Why do so many of the best, most stable portions of the community stand aloof, and refuse to countenance what is in this age called Spiritualism; in other ages under other forms—necromancy, witchcraft?

Bear me witness, now, that I do not apply the opprobious term, witch, to a modern medium. I do no such thing. Some of them are my personal friends, whose characters I respect, whose friendship I prize, and whose feelings I would not unnecessarily injure; and I feel conscious that nearly twenty-nine years residence in this city has convinced them that I am charitable in my feelings, and that I am kindly honorable to those who differ from me in their views. I beg you to observe that I do not say that modern mediums, in their *social* or *moral* characters, *are for a moment to*

be classified with those wicked ones of old. All I say is, that it is my own conviction that one of the agencies employed by the woman of Endor and others of her class, was the same mesmeric or nervous principle, inhering as a natural element in certain conditions of the body and mind; an element which, traceable through all history in varied developments, call it spiritual influence if you will, for it certainly is intermediate between ordinary mind and matter, is the cause of those manifestations which they honestly think are caused by departed spirits. But then the question returns—"*Why are they to be deplored?*" I answer you honestly and candidly. Because the spiritists are mistaken *in supposing that the phenomena they witness are new, whereas, even our own country has been the scene of far stranger events.* Consult Mather's Magnalia, Book 6, pp. 69–70, and you will find, that in the days of New England witchcraft, mysterious rappings were heard—scratchings on bedsteads—drumming on boards—voices—a frying-pan rang so loud that it was heard an hundred yards distant—sounds of steps, and clattering of chairs were heard in empty rooms—ignorant men spake in various languages—one little girl argued concerning death with paraphrases on the thirty-first Psalm which amazed the people—they spoke Hebrew and Greek—and the mediums while thus doing *closed their eyes—their frames were stiff*—one person was said to *have been drawn up by unseen power to the ceiling—violent convulsions, twitching of the muscles—oscillation of the body were the accompaniments.*

And what is remarkable in the analogy, Bancroft quotes from the diary of Mather this entry made after the witchcraft excitement, by which he was carried away, had died out: "*I had temptations to Atheism, and to the abandonment of all religion as a delusion.*" Who can wonder at this? Similar results from yielding to such excitements strew the world's history. Such "wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

Read that chapter of American History, and you will see that when the nightmare of the delusion passed away, the delivered people cried:

> "See! they're gone.———
> The earth has bubbles, as the waters have
> And these were some of them; they vanished
> Into air, and what seemed corporeal,
> Melted, as breath into the wind."

They are mistaken, as Saul was, and the world has always been, *in ascribing whatever was strange and to them inexplicable, to supernatural powers;* whereas, advancing science has demonstrated that there are mysterious laws in our complex nature not yet fully understood, but which are amply adequate to account for all that has been seen or heard. Moreover, they make a sad mistake in arguing that because the Bible records instances of spiritual communications to men, that in this they find a probability in favor of their theory. But what communications are thus recorded? Those of angels sent by God on important errands, *not the spirits of the departed.*

Oh, I have one dear boy whose body now reposes in the grave, and whose darling soul is in heaven, and from the depths of a stricken heart I say, let no one attempt to call him from the bosom of Jesus; nay, I say of him as David said of his boy, "*I shall go to him, he shall not return to me.*"

A fact recorded in 2 Chron. xxi: 12 has been used to prove that a communication has been received from a departed spirit. The record does not declare that the "writing" which came from Elijah to Jehoram was sent by *him after his translation.*

The books of Chronicles are a continuation of the Jewish history, and contain withal historic, facts not given in the books of Samuel and Kings, though synchronous with these. By reference to 2 Kings i: 17, it will be seen that Elijah *lived at the same time as Jehoram,* and in the absence of any statement to the contrary we are to conclude by every rule of historic interpretation, that the "writing," or letter from Elijah to Jehoram was sent while the former was yet on the earth.

And nothing is plainer than that the scriptures teach, that Angels *are a distinct order of intelligences.* It has been thought that at least two passages favored the theory of communications from the spirits of the departed dead to the living. These are found in Rev. xix: 9–10 and xxii: 8–9; but the correct rendering of these verses gives no such meaning. The being who appeared is stated to have been an "Angel," chap. xxii: 8. Now, the proof that angels are not disembodied human spirits, is found in Hebrews xii: 22–23, where Paul classifies the "*innumerable company of angels,*" and "*the spirits of just men made perfect,*" as different orders of spiritual existences. This was one of the former, and the

true rendering of his words is—"*I am thy fellow servant;*" that is, I am engaged in serving God just as you are; "*and of thy brethren, the Prophets;*" that is, I am also a fellow servant of thy brethren, the prophets. And like a true angel he directed attention away from himself, by saying "worship God," and as God's angels ever did, before this department of their services closed, at the completion of Revelation, and the coming of the Holy Spirit to teach, illuminate and guide our souls—this angel bore his witness to our adorable Christ, by affirming that "*the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*"

We oppose them, because, believing as we do from history and from science, that what is seen and heard is the result of a high state of nervous and magnetic excitement, it is highly *injurious to the physical constitution.* Remember, your mediums are generally young girls, or highly excitable women, or, what is more pitiable, nervous men. Remember, that the more they attend circles where, in silence, this nervous magnetic principle is excited, the more deranged their nervous organizations become; until, not unfrequently, wildness and even insanity is the result. It is dangerous to experiment with our nervous energy. We oppose them because we are forbidden to seek knowledge "from such sources."—Isaiah viii: 19; Deut. xviii: 10, 11, 12. Why?

It is not thus to be obtained. It is a significant fact that all the literature of spiritism *has not added a new thought to the world of mind.* One of the ablest thinkers, calmest investigators and best writers in America—I refer to Mr. Ripley of the *New York Tribune*, who is familiarly acquainted with the phenomena and literature of Spiritism—in a withering review of Mr. Owen's last book, wrote the following as his convictions: "*As illustrations of religious truth they* (spirit communications) *can never take the place of oracles of old; as fictions of the imagination they are inferior to the creations of romance; and as expositions of scientific facts they are a folly and a snare. The hope of gaining increase of knowledge from such glamour is no less absurd than to study the principles of motion in the mysteries of the Chinese puzzle.*" Mr. Owen himself, in that very book says "that exclusive devotion to spiritual influences produces *a vague and heavy literature in which common sense has no part.*"

Moreover, Spiritism is now chiefly employed *in destroying confidence in the Bible, and promulgating exploded heresies.*

I am aware that a great many good people, honest people, do not believe this. They hear Spiritists proclaiming that they love the Bible "a thousand times" more than they did when they professed religion. But, what next? You hear from the same lips the most bitter sarcasms — the fiercest denunciations — the keenest ridicule — the most strenuous denials — of portions of the same Bible. You hear vauntingly proclaimed, as if they were new, the charges made by infidels, ages agone, against the Scriptures, which have been triumphantly answered a thousand times.

Moreover, we oppose Spiritism because it is becoming, in my judgment, *the fruitful source* of other errors. I believe that "Free-loveism" is simply Spiritism gone to seed. *What is that?* It is the doctrine of which Victoria Woodhull is the leading exponent and advocate. She declared it, not when she presided in this city, over "The National Convention" of Spiritists, but in a public meeting in New York, where she affirmed,—"*Yes, I am a free lover! I believe I have an inalienable right to change my husband every day, if I like. I trust I am understood, for I mean what I say, and I say what I mean.*"

Now, I do not say that all Spiritists are free-lovers. I know they are not. Many of them despise this doctrine as much as we do. But I do say *that the leading free-lovers are Spiritists.* And until Spiritism excludes these people—as churches exclude its heretics, fallen ministers and members—it will be held responsible for their doctrine, and it ought to be Is it not remarkable that *the Bible foretells exactly these times, people and doctrines?*

I quote 1 Timothy iv : 1, 2, 3. "Now, the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times *some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry!!!*"

This "ism" has lately been loudly both decrying and praising the Bible. Now, the Bible says, "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not." Spiritism directs us, in opposition, to seek it of disembodied spirits. Christianity holds up the Lord Jesus Christ as the great Revealer of God and duty to man. Spiritism degrades him to the plane occupied by thousands of other mediums, and *then disbelieves his testimony regarding himself*, when he declares, "*All power is given to me in*

Heaven and in earth," "*All things are delivered unto me of my Father*," "*That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father*," "*All judgment is committed unto the Son*," "*And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me*," "*Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden.*" *Spiritism ignores the Holy Spirit;* of whom the Lord Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;" "*He shall teach you all things*, and bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." He is called "the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, because He dwelleth in you, and shall be in you." "*He will guide you into all truth.*" Here is the *genuine Spiritualism* of the Bible. O, that men would seek the Divine Spirit, His illumination, His guidance, consolations in their sorrows, directions in their perplexities! Did not the Lord say, "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.*"

Spiritism practically ignores *prayer to God*, one of whose sweetest titles is—"*Hearer of Prayer.*" It substitutes in place of it, invocations to departed human spirits, the most of whose so-called communications demonstrate that instead of "progressing" they have retrograded in sense, in taste and in ability. Mr. Gardner, one of its leaders and ablest advocates, publicly declared in "the National Convention," held in this city, that he "*wanted no more praying to Jupiter, Josh, Jehovah, or any other imaginary God.*"

Finally it does no practical good. What hospital or asylum for the poor, sick or degraded, has it founded? where are the drunkards it has reformed? the degraded it has elevated? the ignorant it has instructed? where are the families it has made holier, happier, more benevolent and useful? Are not its energies directed not against the rampant vices of our city, but against our Bible, our churches, our ministers, our christianity? Is it not forever arguing, debating, contending, instead of preaching "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will to men," and laboring to make men purer, better, more charitable, and more beneficent? Is not its animus arrogant, pretentious, illiberal, denunciatory, fierce? I affirm that it has made no good man or woman better; and that it has made many others more conceited, more self-complacent,

more uncharitable towards those who differ from them, than ever they were before. It loudly professes liberality, and yet is most intolerant, illiberal and bigoted itself. "By their fruits ye shall know them; do men gather grapes of thorns? or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and *every evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*"

Tell me honestly whether true science, developing the deep principles of nature, which is God's elder scripture, does not supply all our material wants? Tell me honestly and truly, ye who know what there is—for many there are who do not—in spiritual Christianity, genuine Bible religion, God's later scripture, what hope, what fear, what desire, what want, what yearning of our soul it does not supply, in its sublime revealments of God, of man, of law, of gospel, of time, of eternity?

O Bible Christianity! sure word of prophecy—lamp of our feet—guide of our way—illuminator of our reason and of the great mysteries of Providence and eternity: blessed Christianity! sealed by the blood of the Son of God, attested by genuine miracles, signets of the Almighty—confirmed by the testimony of millions of bleeding martyrs and the history of eighteen centuries: precious Christianity! thou soother of human sorrows; thou support when all else fails; guide of wayward youth; staff of tottering age; victor over death; opener of Heaven, with the pious of earth and the ransomed of glory, I bow my soul before thee in humility, in awe, in thanksgiving; for thou art the hope of humanity, the originator of all noble reforms and generous charities. Thou art our sun and all other lights

"Lead but to bewilder, and dazzle to blind."

Thou art our rock, and all is sea beside. It is the boast of spiritism that the numbers of professors of religion are decreasing; that in a few years the Bible will be merely an antiquated relic of the past; that Christian churches will be broken up, Christian sanctuaries converted into halls for exhibitions. Its leaders at least are resolved that if these results are not reached, it shall not be their fault. What awaits us in this regard in the future I know not. That Christianity is to be attacked more fiercely than ever before, that there will be a great falling off of nominal professors, that the Christian church will be sifted—the prophecies of my Bible

assure me. For aught I know, Christianity may again, as in the past, suffer a temporary defeat, its true followers suffer bitter persecutions, and error seem to have the ascendancy. But I do know that

> "Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;
> The eternal years of God are hers!"

I do know that the once crucified but now glorified Jesus, the friend of the poor, the needy, the oppressed of all mankind, on whose immaculate brow triumphant error once wreathed the crown of thorns, shall yet wear the resplendent crown of all the earth—shall see of the travail of his soul in a regenerated humanity, a redeemed world, and be satisfied. I do know, that though I myself may apostatize, though all professors may turn their backs on true religion, and wander after every "ism" that may start up and draw its thousands after it, that still "He shall have a seed to serve Him"; that still in this very world in whose soil His gory cross was planted, whose air was vocal with His death-groans! yea, this earth, the scene of His ignominy, shall yet be the theatre of the glory of His conquering grace; and as it revolves in its orbit, shall send up to the throne of the God of the Bible, anthems of praise loud as seven thunders, and melodious as the choruses of eternity-trained angels.

One thing is certain, as Milton has beautifully said, in his Christmas Hymn—

> "The oracles are dumb;
> No voice or hideous hum
> Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
> Apollo from his shrine,
> Can no more divine
> With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving:
> No nightly trance or breathed spell
> Inspires the pale-eyed priests from the prophetic cell."

The heathen oracle is no more, the witchcraft of past days is no more—*in that form;* delusions which have beclouded the minds of men are fast disappearing before true science and true religion, but "Beware lest any man spoil you, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men and the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

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